CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	**Chippewa Cree Road Use**
Proposed Implementation Date:	Immediately after online scoping (LUL will expire August 30 2012)
Proponent:	Chippewa Cree Construction Co.
Location:	30N 14E 34
County:	Hill County
Trust:	Common Schools

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The proponent is requesting a Land Use License to do maintenance and ingress egress on established road to quarry on Reservation lands. Secondary LUL or Right of Way Easement may be applied for the purpose of ingress egress to install and maintain an aerial tower on tribal land.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation/ Trust Lands Management Division (DNRC/TLMD) – Helena, MT and the Northeastern Land Office (NELO) have jurisdiction over this project as it relates to State Lands. This Environmental Checklist will be posted on the internet for thirty (30) days.

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

DNRC/TLMD and NELO are not aware of any other agencies with jurisdiction or other permits needed to complete this project. Rocky Boy Tribal Council is aware of the project.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A (No Action) – Under this alternative, the DNRC **does not** allow the proponent to use the established road to access quarry on Reservation Lands.
Alternative B (the Proposed Action) – Under this alternative, the DNRC **does** allow the proponent to use established road to access quarry on Reservation Lands.

III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:

Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify any cumulative impacts to soils.

This tract and the surrounding area consist primarily of clay loams on 8 to 60 percent slopes. Slopes are mostly south facing with rocky outcrops. Suitability classifications for road building on the route are rated at somewhat limited to very limited. These limitations are primarily due to slope. There will be no public road use on this project, and traffic in general will be minimal. All of these soils are subject to erosion if necessary steps aren't taken. Water bars, crowning, and culverts will mitigate erosion concerns.

No negative effects on the soil quality, stability or moisture are anticipated.

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:

Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify cumulative effects to water resources.

No important groundwater resources are expected to be impacted.

No cumulative effects to the water resources are anticipated.

Box Elder Creek is the nearest tributary to the project. Erosion mitigation efforts will maintain water quality.

6. AIR QUALITY:

What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.

Dust may be created by ingress/egress of heavy equipment.

No cumulative effects to air quality are anticipated.

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:

What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify cumulative effects to vegetation.

Road is already established.
Licensee is required to comply with the Montana County Noxious Weed Management Act. Chippewa Cree Natural Resources Noxious Weed Department is responsible to perpetually monitor and control weeds along project route.

Montana Natural Heritage Program doesn't list any plant species of concern in the township in question.
No negative effects.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:
Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

Road is already established. Any effects would be minimal and short term.
There are no known Sage Grouse Leks in the area.
Montana Natural Heritage Tracker shows one avian species of concern within the township. Ardea heradios (Great Blue Heron) is potentially in the area but its habitat is riparian forest, of which there is none near the project area.
There are two fish species of concern listed (Etheostoma exile "Iowa Darter", and Phoxinus eos "Northern Redbelly Dace") within the township, but with mitigation efforts this project will have no effects to Box Elder Creek on adjoining property.

9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:
Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

There are no unique, endangered, fragile or limited environmental resources within the scope of this project.
Road is already established. No negative effects.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:
Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

An archaeological survey was conducted in August of 2004. Two stone circles and hearth circle (24HL-A) were located near the existing road. Cultural property should be flagged to avoid disturbance.
Road is already established. No negative effects.

11. AESTHETICS:
Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature, or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify cumulative effects to aesthetics.

Road is already established. No negative effects.
Maintaining the road will prevent erosion and weeds thereby improving the aesthetics over the long run.

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:
Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify cumulative effects to environmental resources.

No demands on limited resources are required for this project.

No direct or cumulative effects to environmental resources are anticipated.

13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA:
List other studies, plans or projects on this tract. Determine cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of current private, state or federal actions in the analysis area, and from future proposed state actions in the analysis area that are under MEPA review (scoped) or permitting review by any state agency.

There are no other projects or plans being considered on the tracts listed on this EA.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

There are some human safety risks associated with operating heavy machinery. The proponent and their employees accept these risks.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

Fixing the road will prevent more damage and better access to the quarry. Installation of cattle guards will help lessee keep cattle in while trucks are hauling.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:

Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to the employment market.

No negative effects to the employment market are anticipated.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:

Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

There are no direct or cumulative effects to taxes or revenue for the proposed project.

18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:

Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

There will be no increases in traffic, no changes in traffic patterns, and no need for additional fire protection, or police services.

There will be no direct or cumulative effects on government services.

19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:

List State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, and other zoning or management plans, and identify how they would affect this project.

There are no zoning or other agency management plans affecting these lands.

20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:

Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

There are no wilderness areas or access routes through this tract.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:
Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing

The proposal does not include any changes to housing or developments.

No direct or cumulative effects to population or housing are anticipated.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:
Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

There are no native, unique or traditional lifestyles or communities in the vicinity that would be impacted by the proposal. Road has been established for many years. No negative effects.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:
How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

No negative effects.

24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:
Estimate the return to the trust. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

License will provide a onetime $200 dollar fee to the trust.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	**Name:** Monte McNally **Title:** Land Use Specialist	
Signature: /s/ Monte McNally		**Date**: 5/2/2012

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

I have selected the **Alternative B (Proposed Action),** and recommend that the DNRC **does** allow the proponent to maintain road and ingress/egress during the length of the license to expire August 30, 2012.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

I have evaluated the potential environment affects and have determined that there are no significant impacts.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

☐	EIS	☐	More Detailed EA	**XXX**	No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	**Name:**	Barny D. Smith
	Title:	Unit Manager, Northeastern Land Office
Signature: /s/ Barny D. Smith	**Date**:	May 3, 2012